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Message Text

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ACTION H-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 HA-05 /018 W
----------059450 260757Z /17
R 260505Z JUL 78
FM AMEMASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6735

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 KUALA LUMPUR 7655

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, MY
SUBJECT: VISIT OF STAFFDEL CLINE AND ENDRES TO MALAYSIA -
SUGGESTED STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 7079

1. FOLLOWING IS THE STATEMENT SUGGESTED IN PARA 2 REFTEL
FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S APPROVAL AND TRANSMITTAL TO STAFFER
CLINE OF HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY.

2. STATEMENT TITLED "STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ROBERT H.
MILLER ON INDOCHINA REFUGEE SITUATION IN MALAYSIA."

3. BEGIN TEXT: MALAYSIA HAS BECOME THE COUNTRY OF FIRST
ASYLUM FOR THE VAST MAJORITY OF VIETNAMESE FLEEING
THEIR COUNTRY BY SEA. SINCE 1975, SOME 23,000 SUCH REFUGEES
HAVE SOUGHT AND BEEN GRANTED TEMPORARY HAVEN ON MALAYSIAN
SHORES. IN RECENT MONTHS, THE NUMBER OF NEW ARRIVALS
FROM VIETNAM HAS INCREASED MARKEDLY -- 13,000 HAVE ARRIVED
IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, ALMOST 6,000 OF THEM
IN MAY AND JUNE ALONE. ARRIVALS IN JULY ARE CONTINUING
AT THE SAME HIGH RATE.

4. THE REFUGEES COME FROM ALL ETHNIC BACKGROUNDS
AND ALL WALKS OF LIFE IN VIETNAM. THEY ARE DOCTORS,
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LAWYERS, AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS. THEY ARE BUSINESS-
MEN AS WELL AS FORMER CIVIL SERVANTS AND MILITARY MEN.
THEY AREORDINARY FARMERS AND FISHERMEN. THEY ARE ALL
AGES, AND IN SOME CASES THEY ARE YOUNG PEOPLE AND
CHILDREN ALONE, WITHOUT PARENTS OR RELATIVES.THEY
HAVE ALL MADE THE SAME WRENCHING DECISION TO ABANDON
THEIR NATIVE LAND AND TO SEEK FREEDOM AND A NEW LIFE

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FOR THEMSELVES ELSEWHERE. THEY ARE THE SURVIVORS
OF A PERILOUS JOURNEY TO MALAYSIA IN FRAGILE, OFTEN
UNSEAWORTHY SHIPS. HUNDREDS, PERHAPS THOUSANDS,
OF THEIR COMPATRIOTS HAVE PERISHED ALONG THE WAY.

5. THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE HAVE GRANTED
TEMPORARY HAVEN TO THESE REFUGEES WHO HAVE RISKED THIS
DANGEROUS SEA VOYAGE FROM VIETNAM. IT IS THE MALAYSIAN
GOVERNMENT'S STATED POLICY TO TREAT THESE REFUGEES IN A
HUMANITARIAN FASHION, AND THEY HAVE BEEN TRUE TO THEIR
WORD. CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAVE, IN
COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR
REFUGEES AND THE MALAYSIAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY, PROVIDED
ADEQUATE FOOD, SHELTER, MEDICAL CARE, AND OTHER NECESSARY
FACILITIES TO ALL. TO DATE, THEY HAVE ALSO ALLOWED SOME
1,500 MUSLIM REFUGEES FROM CAMBODIA TO RESETTLE
PERMANENTLY IN MALAYSIA, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF LOCAL
RELIGIOUS ORGANZIATIONS.

6. MALAYSIAN HOSPITALITY IS NOW BEING SEVERELY TESTED,
HOWEVER, BY THE RAPIDLY SWELLING REFUGEE ARRIVALS IN
THEIR COUNTRY. NOT ONLY ARE THESE NUMBERS STRAINING
AVAILABLE RESOURCES, BUT THEY ARE FAR EXCEEDING
THE CURRENT RATE AT WHICH THE REFUGEES ARE ABLE TO
DEPART FOR COUNTRIES OF TRADITIONAL RESETTLEMENT
SUCH AS THE UNITED STATES AND AUSTRALIA. MALAYSIAN
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AUTHORITIES HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR CONTINUED
HUMANITARIAN CONCERN FOR THE REFUGEES, BUT THEY HAVE ALSO
MADE CLEAR THEIR INCREASING APPREHENSION AT THE GROWING
EXCESS OF ARRIVALS OVER DEPARTURES. THEY POINT
OUT THAT THEY ARE ALSO RESPONSIBLE AT THE SAME TIME
FOR SOME 90,000 FILIPINO REFUGEES WHO HAVE SOUGHT REFUGE
IN MALAYSIA FROM THE FIGHTING IN THE SOUTHERN
PHILIPPINES.

7. IN RECOGNITION OF THE MALAYSIAN EFFORTS, AND
IN KEEPING WITH ITS OWN TRADITIONAL HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES,
THE UNITED STATES IS MAKING A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION
TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE URGENT PROBLEM IN
MALAYSIA. SINCE 1975, WE HAVE ACCEPTED OVER 5,000
INDOCHINA REFUGEES FROM MALAYSIA FOR RESETTLEMENT
IN OUR COUNTRY, AND ANOTHER 1,5000 HAVE BEEN APPROVED
FOR PAROLE INTO THE UNITED STATES AND ARE AWAITING
SPONSORSHIP ASSURANCES. WE HAVE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED
A NEW PROGRAM FOR THE ENTRY OF 25,000 ADDITIONAL
INDOCHINA REFUGEES IN THE NEXT TEN MONTHS, OF WHICH
ONE HALF WILL BE THOSE WHO FLED VIETNAM BY SEA.
THE BULK OF THESE "BOAT PEOPLE" WILL BE TAKEN FROM

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MALAYSIA. WE HAVE CONTRIBUTED MORE THAN $ ONE MILLION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES
FOR THE CARE OF REFUGEES IN MALAYSIA AND HAVE ALLOTTED
ANOTHER $1.5 MILLION FOR THEIR TRANSPORT TO THE
UNITED STATES.

8. WE HAVE EXPANDED OUR REFUGEE STAFF IN MALAYSIA,
AND IT NOW CONSISTS OF TWO FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS
AND FOUR REPRESENTATIVES FROM U.S. PRIVATE VOLUNTARY
AGENCIES. ALL ENJOY THE CLOSEST COOPERATION
WITH MALAYSIAN AUTHORITIES AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS
AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE REFUGEE
PROBLEM. THE MALAYSIAN GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS
HAS EXPRESSED ITS APPRECIATION FOR OUR SUPPORT AND
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ASSISTANCE.

9. THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT BEEN ALONE IN THIS
EFFORT. ON THE CONTRARY, THERE HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIAL
INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE REFUGEE PROGRAM
IN MALAYSIA. THE PROGRAM IS COORDINATED OVERALL BY
THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES,

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ACTION H-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 HA-05 /018 W
----------058985 260758Z /17
R 260505Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 KUALA LUMPUR 7655

WHOSE REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE IS STATIONED IN KUALA
LUMPUR AND WHOSE STAFF INCLUDES SIX PROFESSIONAL PER-
SONNEL AND A 1978 BUDGET OF $2 MILLION. THE INTER-
GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION ALSO IS

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MAKING A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION IN STAFF AND FUNDING IN
THE ALL-IMPORTANT TASK OF FACILITATING REFUGEE TRAVEL
TO COUNTRIES OF RESETTLEMENT. IN ADDITION TO THE
UNITED STATES, AUSTRALIA IS IN THE FOREFRONT OF THESE
COUNTRIES, HAVING TAKEN FROM MALAYSIA NEARLY 3,500
INDOCHINA REFUGEES FOR RESETTLEMENT ALREADY AND PLANNING
TO ACCEPT SEVERAL THOUSAND MORE OVER THE NEXT TEN
MONTHS. FRANCE, TOO, HAS MADE A MAJOR EFFORT, HAVING
TAKEN MORE THAN 500 FROM MALAYSIA ALONE (AND MANY
MORE FROM THAILAND). CANADA, NEW ZEALAND, AND SEVERAL
WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE ALSO COOPERATED IN
PROVIDING A PERMANENT REFUGE FOR SMALLER NUMBERS OF THOSE
INDOCHINA REFUGEES WHO HAVE MADE THEIR WAY TO MALAYSIA. IN
ALL, OVER 10,000 BOAT REFUGEES HAVE ALREADY DEPARTED
FROM MALAYSIAN CAMPS FOR PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT
IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

10. DESPITE ALL THESE EFFORTS, HOWEVER, THE SITUATION
IS BECOMING CRITICAL. THE NUMBER OF ARRIVALS
CONTINUES TO EXCEED DEPARTURES. IN JUNE, FOR EXAMPLE,
2,700 REFUGEES ARRIVED, AND DESPITE THE FACT THAT
DEPARTURES TO THE UNITED STATES SET A NEW MONTHLY
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RECORD OF 857, ONLY A TOTAL OF 1,689 LEFT FOR THE
UNITED STATES AND OTHER COUNTRIES.SO FAR IN JULY,
MORE THAN 2,700 REFUGEE HAVE ARRIVED AND ONLY
1,375 HAVE DEPARTED. SINCE MARCH, THE STANDING CAMP
POPULATION HAS GROWN FROM ABOUT 5,400 TO OVER 13,600. MORE AND
MORE, THOSE WHO MANAGE TO ARRIVE SAFELY FACE A LONG
WAIT IN INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT CONDITIONS
AS CAMPS BECOME MORE CROWDED. MANY STILL HAVE NO HOPE YET
OF BEING ACCEPTED ANYWHERE FOR PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT.

11. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT WE AND OTHER MUST DO MORE
TO HELP RESOLVE THIS PRESSING HMANITARIAN PROBLEM.
ALONG WITH ITS OTHER ASEAN COLLEAGUES, MALAYSIA HAS CALLED
FOR GREATER INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS IN THIS REGARD, AND THE
ARITHMETIC OF THE SITUATION CLEARLY DEMANDS SUCH ACTION. I
CAN IMAGINE NOTHING MORE IN KEEPING WITH OUR HUMANITARIAN
PRINCIPLES AND TRADITIONS THAN AN EVEN GREATER EFFORT ON OUR
PART TO HELP. NOTHING WOULD BE MORE WELCOME TO THE
MALAYSIANS THEMSELVES, WHO HAVE ALREADY SHOWN THAT THEY
SHARE THESE PRINCIPLES AND TRADITIONS WITH US BY THE WAY
THEY HAVE WELCOMED AND CARED FOR REFUGEES ARRIVING
ON THEIR SHORES.

12. I BELIEVE THAT, AS A GOVERNMENT AND A NATION, WE
MUST CONSIDER THIS AS A LONG-TERM PROBLEM AND TAKE THE
NECESSARY MEASURES TO DEAL WITH IT ON THAT

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BASIS, AND THEREBY ENCOURAGE OTHERNATIONS TO DO THE
SAME. FOR OUR PART, PERMANENT LEGISLATION PROVIDING
FOR THE CONTINUING ACCEPTANCE OF INDOCHINA REFUGEES INTO
THE UNITED STATES IN NUMBERS COMMENSURATE TO THE
PROBLEM WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT STEP IN THIS DIRECTION.
CONGRESS HAS ALREADY PROVIDED BOTH MORAL AND FINANCIAL
SUPPORT IN GENEROUS MEASURE TO THIS EFFORT, SUPPORT
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WHICH HAS LITERALLY SAVED LIVES AND PREVENTED SUFFERING
ON A LARGE SCALE. I BELIEVE IT CAN DO NO LESS IN
CONTINUING AND EVEN INCREASING SUCH SUPPORT FOR THE
SAME BASIC HUMANITARIAN PURPOSE. END TEXT.

13. IF DEPARTMENT APPROVES STATEMENT, IT MAY WISH TO REPEAT TO
OTHER POSTS.

14. DECLASSIFY UPON RECEIPT.
MILLER

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